

A close-up photograph of a person wearing a wide-brimmed, woven straw hat. The hat features a flat top and a wide, slightly upturned brim, both made of a light-colored, textured straw material. The person's face is partially visible, wearing a dark, textured garment. The background is a soft, out-of-focus mix of blue and white.

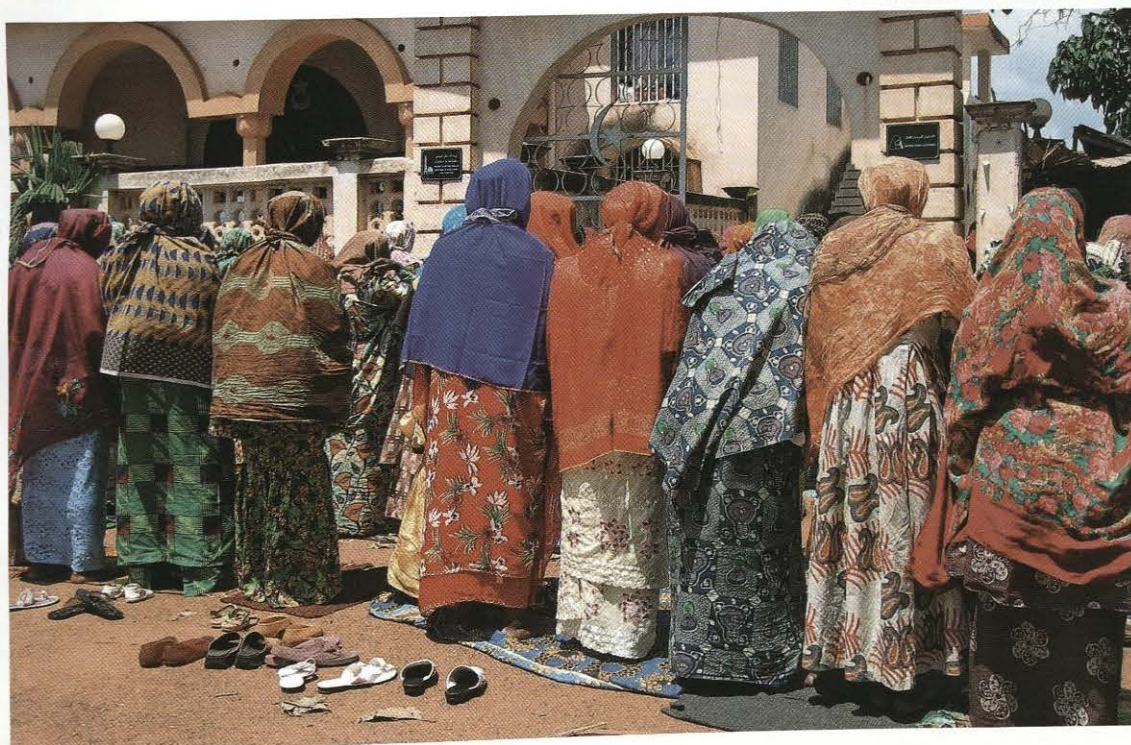




SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA, AUSTRALASIA, AND THE PACIFIC

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NIGERIA AND THE GULF OF GUINEA



SET CONSULTANTS

Rudi van Aarde, Conservation Ecology Research Unit, Department of Zoology and Entomology, University of Pretoria, South Africa

Sharad Master, School of Geosciences, University of Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, South Africa

Peter Mitchell, Professor of African Archaeology, St. Hugh's College, University of Oxford, England

Ceri Peach, School of Geography, University of Oxford, England

John Rennie Short, Department of Geography and Public Policy, University of Maryland Baltimore County

VOLUME CONSULTANTS

Claude Ardouin, Africa Section, Department of Africa, Oceania, and the Americas, British Museum, London, England

Andrew S. Goudie, School of Geography and the Environment, Oxford University Centre for the Environment, England

Matthew Kirwin, Department of Political Science, College of Social Science, Michigan State University, East Lansing

Ignatius A. Madu, Department of Geography, University of Nigeria, Nsukka

Gerhard Seibert, Center for African Studies, Institute of Labor Science and Enterprise, Lisbon, Portugal

AUTHORS

Babson Ajibade, Department of Visual Arts and Technology, Cross River University of Technology, Calabar, Nigeria

Claude Ardouin, Africa Section, Department of Africa, Oceania, and the Americas, British Museum, London, England

David Dorward, History Program (and formerly of African Research Institute), La Trobe University, Bundoora, Victoria, Australia

Emmanuel Duru, Department of Political Science, University of Calabar, Nigeria

John Haywood, History Department, Lancaster University, England

Juan Tomás Avila Laurel, Ciudad de Ela Nguema, Bioko Island, Republic of Equatorial Guinea

Stephen Manning, Department of History, School of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Exeter, England

Emmanuel Nuesiri, African Environments Programme, Oxford University Centre for Environment, England

Jeremy Rich, History Department, Middle Tennessee State University, Murfreesboro.

Gerhard Seibert, Center for African Studies, Institute of Labor Science and Enterprise, Lisbon, Portugal

John Swift, Division of History and Geography, Faculty of Education, University of Cumbria, Carlisle, England

Benita Sampedro Vizcaya, Spanish Department of Romance Languages and Literatures, Hofstra University, Hempstead, New York

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Depth and Comparison

The information in each volume is clearly presented and easily accessible to general readers and researchers. Each section, following a standard format for every region and country, provides a concise account that can be understood on its own or readily compared across regions and countries. Photographs and tables illumine the text, which is written by experts from universities, scholarly institutes, and professional organizations from around the world. Coverage for each country includes not only surveys of its modern history, government, and economy but also tables reporting population data and detailed accounts of education, health care, religion, literature, and the performing and visual arts, as well as cooking, dress, and holidays.

Distance, weight, and other arithmetical data are given throughout in American, or imperial, measure, followed by metric equivalents. The editors have gathered and converted figures from various sources, nearly all of which report data only in metric measure. Variations in rounding, therefore, may produce apparent inconsistencies within some tables, especially those reporting small amounts of rainfall.

In order to satisfy readers eager to deepen their knowledge of other cultures, the text does not avoid use of foreign terms and titles but explains their meanings when they arise within the discussion of a country. Each volume includes a volume index and a list of print and electronic resources for further research ranging from travel guides and country histories to daily news sources. Volume 11 provides extensive additional information on the region, as well as comprehensive and thematic indexes. This new encyclopedia, more than simply providing a means for looking up facts about peoples and places, will allow its users to open windows to a richer understanding of world cultures and world history.

Sub-Saharan Africa, Australia, New Zealand, Indian and Pacific Ocean Islands, and Antarctica

Sub-Saharan Africa is a region of great physical, cultural, and climatic diversity with a shared history of European colonialism until the mid-twentieth century. Australia and New Zealand offer a different history of colonialism, engendering essentially Western societies through extensive European settlement. The small island nations of the Pacific and Indian Ocean regions have few resources, and some of the low-lying islands are threatened by rising sea levels. Antarctica's harsh environment attracts intrepid scientists and tourists alike.

Cultural and linguistic diversity as well as the heritage of foreign influence and exploitation that imposed political boundaries regardless of indigenous ethnic, historical, or linguistic realities contributed to making parts of Sub-Saharan Africa zones of conflict in modern times. To this day, parts of Africa remain focal points of ethnic conflict and storehouses of natural resources coveted by the rest of the world, from the United States to China. At the same time, African cultural influences are appearing throughout the world. There have been several local wars, and some countries, such as the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Somalia, no longer control their national territories and are regarded as failed states. By contrast, Australia and New Zealand are peaceful democracies. Some Pacific and Indian Ocean nations experience instability. As with every other region and nation of the world covered among the 57 volumes of *World and Its Peoples*, these 11 volumes aim to provide the context and explanations for genuine understanding of today's interdependent world.

Clive Carpenter, *Consultant Editor*

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